Best-Laid Plans

Here at Circle of Concern, we are always working a plan. When we gather food for Thanksgiving Baskets, for example, we plan who we’ll ask for support, plan for food drive pick-ups and plan for volunteers to distribute the food. Similar plans are in place to share school supplies, to make repairs and improvements to our building and to appeal to our friends for much-needed funding. Sometimes, though, those plans fall apart for reasons we can’t predict.

Such was the case in mid-November. We prepared an end-of-year appeal letter about an amazing client who, with Circle’s help, is making a stable, successful life for herself and her son. The letter made its way to the mail house…and didn’t arrive in homes by the end of the year, which impacted the opportunity for some of our friends to donate to Circle by December 31. As of this writing, it still hasn’t appeared, and we’re investigating the issue.

All of that is to say – things happen. Circumstances beyond our control scuttled our end-of-year appeal. We are now making new plans to ensure we have the funds to provide our services to families that need us.

It’s these families that matter. Our clients live with the painful fall-out when things happen and plans for a secure future fall apart. The family bread-winner is laid off. Devastating illness consumes every penny of savings. A senior planned and saved for retirement, but the money didn’t last. The stories are as plentiful and unique as our clients, themselves.

We’re here for people who must make new plans when the old ones fall apart. Food from the pantry meets a core need. Emergency financial assistance helps keep the electricity on. Scholarships let young people craft plans for a new future. These Circle programs and many more move our clients toward renewed stability when things happen.

If you gifted Circle by December 31, thank you. If you feel moved to do so now, thank you. If you respect the work we do, thank you. Ultimately, each of you makes our work possible as we plan for the future.
A Note from Cyndi

Dear Friends,

At this writing, just weeks into a new decade, the hustle and bustle of the holidays is long behind us. Having now reviewed a snapshot of the 2019 year-end financials, our Board of Directors will soon approve our 2020 budget, allowing for, among other things, increases to both our Scholarship and Summer Opportunities programs.

These efforts support area youngsters and young adults in their journey toward independence, self-reliance and – adulthood. We think that every young person should experience the joy of summer camp, and the challenge of college or trade courses to discover their strengths and abilities, and, ultimately, their place in the world.

Your gifts make these wrap-around programs—and others—possible! With every contribution, you provide sustenance, possibility and hope for our neighbors in need.

We truly thank you for making this work possible.

Cyndi

The Wolf

The Wolf restaurant on Clayton Road in Ballwin is known for supporting local food and drink producers, hosting live music and, mostly, offering clean, wholesome foods that taste amazing. Is it any surprise that their December fundraiser for Circle featured the most wholesome couple of all – Santa and Mrs. Claus?

For a small fee, families took pictures with the Claus’s, plus The Wolf collected food and gave a percentage of the day’s sales to Circle. A good time was had by all…and even little Nora and Ezra warmed up to the excitement! Thank you to our generous friends at The Wolf who made the fun possible!

Assistance League

“One child, one teacher, one book and one pen can change the world.”
~ Malala Yousafzai

Many thanks to the Assistance League of St. Louis for making a change here at Circle with their generous donation of beautiful books for children. The children of our clients have eagerly enjoyed the holiday stories and books featuring children of many cultures and languages. We appreciate the open hearts and open minds of our friends at the Assistance League.
Gallagher Bassett

Sara, Tracey and Mallory—kind hearts times three—made a mark for Circle in December at claims services company Gallagher Bassett. It began when Sara launched a food drive for our food pantry. Tracey then asked that her secret Santa buy food for the drive, rather than purchase a gift for her. When Mallory pulled Tracey’s name for the gift exchange, she surprised the whole work team with many boxes and bags of items on our Needs list.

Thank you to these selfless friends, their colleagues who contributed to the drive and Gallagher Bassett that nurtures such a generous spirit in their community!

...our pantry director, Michelle, wants you to know.

1. Reading our Needs list (the items our clients most look for) and buying those items translates into our clients feeling worthy.

2. Walking through our doors is hard – poverty often carries shame.

3. Our clients are very grateful to our donors even though they don’t get the chance to thank them in person.

This Valentine’s Day, please consider making a gift to Circle of Concern in honor of the families we serve. It’s a wonderful way to love your neighbor!

Many thanks to our friends who are planning their spring gardens with surplus-for-Circle in mind!

OUR MISSION:
Circle of Concern feeds the hungry and provides assistance to low-income families living in west St. Louis County.

OUR VISION:
Improving every life in our community by reducing hunger and poverty.
March 13  El Toluco Mexican Restaurant Benefit (all day)
April 10-11  Circle closed for Easter holiday
May 9  ‘Stamp Out Hunger’ Letter Carrier’s Food Drive Collection Event
May 18  16th Annual Charity Golf Tournament at Aberdeen Golf Club
September 18  Harvest Moon Trivia Night at Andre’s West in Fenton

We share many donations with our clients:
- Food, Canned and Packaged
- Fresh Garden Produce
- Dry Pet Food, Litter
- New School Supplies
- New Blankets, Hats, Gloves

Donations are accepted:
Mon, Tue, Fri................. 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Wednesday .................. 9 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Thursday ..................... 9 a.m. - noon
Saturday...................... 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Important Dates:

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“LIKE US” on Facebook and visit us online at www.circleofconcern.org.

STAFF DIRECTORY

Cyndi Miller, Executive Director .......................... cyndi@circleofconcern.org ........................ ext. 117
Juliet Holden, Senior Director ........................... juliet@circleofconcern.org ........................ ext. 106
Michelle Lepak, Pantry Director .......................... michelle@circleofconcern.org ........................ ext. 107
Stephanie Moreland, Volunteer/Special Events Director .......... stephanie@circleofconcern.org ............ ext. 113
Niki Vandable, Client Services Director ........................ niki@circleofconcern.org ........................ ext. 108